

Maria Juncal Fernandez-Garayzabal Gonzalez
5909 Quantrell Av., Apt 203.
Arlington, VA 22312

To the honorable Judge Liam O' Grady:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Jesse Morton, regarding the most current accusations against him. I apologize beforehand for the extensive letter, but I feel that the allegations are sufficiently severe for me to take the time to address them accordingly and in detail.

First and foremost, I would like to touch upon Jesse's alleged abusive behavior towards me. This issue is particularly hurtful, given past experiences. Unfortunately, I am perfectly aware of what an abusive relationship entails. Before I met Jesse, I had sworn to myself that I would never be in a relationship again. The reason for this promise is the fact that I had been involved in a two-year relationship with an individual who made my life an absolute hell for 18 months. Unfortunately, I am more than aware of what it is to live in fear, to feel that I am below my partner, to think that I was worth nothing more than what he would tell me I was worth and believing that I deserved nothing better. This psychological abuse put me in a situation where I endured and tolerated not only physical abuse, but eventually also sexual abuse. Unfortunately, my friends and family saw this; they saw me annulled and harmed, and, despite their efforts to get me out of there, were unable to do so.

Thankfully, today I find myself in the complete opposite side of the spectrum. I have found in Jesse not only a companion and a lover, but also a best friend. It took me a while to get used to Jesse's behavior towards me. I was unaware of what it was like to have somebody genuinely care for me, to have somebody go out of their way to make sure all my needs were met, to share my life with somebody who truly believes in me and will take any given opportunity to make me shine and succeed. For instance, I recently published a paper in a Spanish social sciences journal, a pre-requisite for me to finish my PhD. I can honestly say that the process would have taken a lot longer had it not been for Jesse's help and input. I speak from experience when I say that somebody who is abusive would never want their significant other to stand out, let alone succeed.

I don't know whether it's Jesse's past, but those who don't know much about me or him seem to find it incomprehensible that somebody "like me" would be in love with somebody "like him". Instead of not taking a stance, or taking the time to see who Jesse is as a human being, it is assumed that I am being manipulated into staying in this relationship. This has two very hurtful inferences. The first one is questioning my intelligence and my prior experiences, implying that I wouldn't be able to identify what has already happened to me in the past. Secondly it implies that somebody "like Jesse" cannot be kind, cannot be caring, cannot be disinterested, cannot be true... However, those who know me almost better than I know myself have been able to put Jesse's past behind and are more than supportive of our relationship. Being aware of my past, they see I'm back to being myself, to being confident, to being genuinely happy.

As I mentioned before, Jesse is not only my companion and my lover, but he is also my best friend. As such, we tell each other everything. Given current circumstances, some of those conversations are not easy. It is not just that he is struggling between a job he doesn't find fulfilling and finding his way back into the CVE space, and it is not just the fear of what might happen with his pending charges. For once, Jesse is consciously addressing his trauma and past experiences; it is not difficult to foresee how this can make unpleasant experiences resurface. I am aware of all of this because Jesse pours his heart out to me without holding anything back. His fears and frustrations may sometimes be expressed with harsh and socially

inappropriate language, but never are his words addressed directly towards me. He is venting with me, not towards me. There is a major difference between the two. Plus, the fact that Jesse is being accused of physically abusing me simply disgusts me. I endured this in my previous relationship, and I have no words to describe the pain that it causes me to have to relive that in my head, especially because of some false accusations. Never has Jesse laid a hand on me, and having lived it, and having experienced what it is to live with that fear, I would never tolerate it.

It is frustrating to know that the person who is accusing Jesse of being abusive is, to a certain extent, aware of my past abusive relationship. It disgusts me to think that somebody who at some point seemed to be becoming a friend would play off my pain, and trivialize something so serious simply to get back at me for personal disputes between she and I. It all started when I asked her to be a co-sponsor for my green card application. Before that, Mrs. Campton would treat us as friends, and would turn to us while she was going through a bad break-up. According to her, she had no other friends, she was extremely happy that she had us as roommates, and had a special affinity with Jesse. However, once her co-sponsorship was sent to USCIS, she claimed that we had tricked her into signing, even despite us having tried to explain multiple times what co-sponsorship entailed: basically nothing, given that Jesse is my main sponsor and that I have a PhD on the way, which should enable me to find a well-paid job and not have to resort to social services. Plus, the current amount of money in my bank account and personal assets are sufficient in and of themselves to be enough for USCIS. From that moment on, her attitude changed dramatically. As a result, Jesse and I have deliberately gone out of our way to avoid any interaction with her: we try to leave on the weekends, during weekdays we stay in our room except for when we need to cook or use the bathroom. Early December she asked us to move out by January, something extremely complicated given Jesse's background. However, we arranged to move out by January 15th and not February. Still she refused to give us \$370 corresponding to the two weeks that we would not be occupying the room.

The best (and easiest) way to hurt me is through Jesse. Attached to this letter is proof of how she threatens to call Mr. Raymond Hess on Jesse when things don't go her way. As you can see, she has even threatened to call USCIS on me, solely because I am currently transitioning between a J1 visa and a permanent residence visa. However, it seems that using people's vulnerabilities and personal information against them is not considered abusive. And this is how this whole situation broke out: Mrs. Campton threatened to call USCIS and Jesse, tired of her attitude was determined to confront her. Jesse and I were coming back from enjoying a lovely evening with friends, and I didn't want any antagonization. I tried to prevent Jesse from going into the house and get into a discussion with her, things got heated, and Jesse raised his voice outside in the hallway. But there was no direct interaction between them.

Mrs. Campton has also said that Jesse drinks daily. I find it difficult to believe that that she would know what we do in the room, seeing that we barely leave it when we're home. In fact, Jesse doesn't drink at all. We have taken the time to research bipolar disorder, and we know how alcohol affects the symptoms. Plus, it would be impossible for her to know what we do, since our interactions with her are extremely limited: Jesse leaves the house before she goes to work and is in bed before 10 every day. I beg you to consider a series of things that prove that Jesse is not drinking. Were he to be drinking, the most probable outcome would have been a relapse on drugs. However, his good test results led Mr. Hess to move him onto phase 2 of urinalysis. Jesse is also working construction, a job for which he wakes up at 5:30 am every day and which requires intense physical labor. This kind of job would be extremely difficult to perform adequately with a hangover. Also, he is currently waiting for his Asbestos certificate, and for that he had to pass both a drug screening and a physical exam. Moreover, Jesse is still able to perform and deliver to those who, increasingly, ask for his input in the CVE space. Proof of Jesse's commitment to improvement is the

fact that, despite increasing opportunities in his true passion – the CVE space-, he is complying with his probation's recommendations and keeping his construction job for both structure and income (Jesse has two beautiful children and needs to pay child support).

The fact that Jesse is successfully holding his job is also directly related to the second set of accusations. These accusations are still in place in spite of the bracelet being returned, and we have made a deliberate effort to find its rightful owner. Again, there are several aspects I would beg you to take into consideration. Jesse, like all of us, has flaws. He may be a lot of things, but he is not thief. Having steady income, there is no need for him to steal, let alone steal a bracelet that I wouldn't even wear because it is not my style.

I feel extremely guilty for this incident. We made several Christmas purchases earlier that day. We left the mall playground, and I noticed the bag sitting beside our things. I handed it to Jesse and asked if it was something we had purchased earlier. All I did was show Jesse a bag that was next to our stuff in the children's playground and ask whether it was ours. He set it down and took it out of the bag and placed it in his coat pocket only because his hands were full, and he was on his way to change the diaper of his son with Downs Syndrome. Once home, the bracelet was put with the rest of the gifts that were going to be sent to Spain. I didn't go through the gifts until December 22nd: We returned the bracelet that same day. Had I gone through the gifts on the 20th or the 19th in the evening, the bracelet would have been returned then. Because that is the truth: the moment we realized that we had taken something that was not ours, we immediately went to give it back.

We received a call from the Franconia police Station only on December 26th. No message was left on the answering machine, so we were unaware of the fact that there was a warrant for Jesse's arrest. I was taken aback when Jesse was arrested because of this issue. The bracelet has been back at the store since December 22nd, and we have regularly kept in touch with the store to check whether the owner had been identified. Please consider that Fairfax County has let him out on a PR bond. He is no risk to society or to himself, and there is no risk of him fleeing. We have moved out of our previous residence and no longer have contact with the former roommate.

Your Honor, we have already seen ourselves in a situation where I have had to acknowledge Jesse's misconduct. I have never been reluctant to speak the truth, even if, like last time, it could bring about consequences for Jesse. However, this is not the case. I beg you take into consideration all the points raised above and think about the effects of Jesse being incarcerated: losing his job, not having access to trauma treatment, two very young children having to be without their father and me having to lose my main support until all Jesse's legal issues are resolved.

Sincerely,

Maria Fernandez-Garayzabal Gonzalez